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I, JULIE BILLINGSLEY, TEAM LEADER EXAMINATION SUPPORT AND SALES hereby certify that annexed is a true copy of the Provisional specification in connection with Application No. 2003901349 for a patent by LISA RENEE HAYDEN as filed on 25 March 2003.

WITNESS my hand this
Thirty-first day of March 2004

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JULIE BILLINGSLEY
TEAM LEADER EXAMINATION
SUPPORT AND SALES

AUSTRALIA

Patents Act 1990

PROVISIONAL SPECIFICATION

Applicant(s) :

LISA RENEE HAYDEN

Invention Title:

A MACHINE FOR VENDING FLORAL ARRANGEMENTS

The invention is described in the following statement:

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A MACHINE FOR VENDING FLORAL ARRANGEMENTS

Technical Field

This invention relates to a machine for vending
5 flower arrangements.

Summary of the Invention

In a first aspect the present invention provides a
machine for vending floral arrangements including a stack
10 of generally circular carousels each for supporting a
plurality of floral arrangements; and
a generally cylindrical exterior housing surrounding the
carousels.

By providing a combination of both cylindrical
15 carousels and a cylindrical exterior housing, the space
within the machine is utilised efficiently. Further, use
of a circular housing provides a machine which makes
efficient use of floor space in the location in which it
is situated.

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In a second aspect the present invention provides a
machine for vending floral arrangements including a stack
of carousels each supporting a plurality of floral
arrangements; and each of the plurality of floral
25 arrangements supported on each carousel are of the same
type and are vended at the same price.

In a third aspect the present invention provides a
machine for vending floral arrangements including a
30 carousel for supporting a plurality of floral
arrangements; the machine has a front and a back and
includes at least one viewing window associated with the
carousel, each viewing window being arranged to permit
viewing of only one floral arrangement; the at least one
35 viewing window is positioned towards either one or both of
the front or back of the machine; and light from outside
the machine may reach the floral arrangements on the

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carousel only by passing through the at least one viewing window.

In this way, the level of light reaching the floral arrangements from outside of the machine is kept to a minimum, whilst still allowing viewing of the contents of the machine.

Brief Description of the Drawings

An embodiment of the present invention will now be described, by way of example only, with reference to the accompanying drawings, in which:

Figure 1 is a front view of an embodiment of a machine for vending floral arrangements according to the present invention;

Figure 2 is a rear and partially cut away view of the machine of figure 1; and

Figure 3 is a top view of one of the modules of the machine of figure 1.

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Detailed Description of the Preferred Embodiment

Referring to Figures 1 and 2, a machine 10 is shown for vending floral arrangements. Machine 10 includes a generally circular exterior housing 12 formed by the exteriors of a number of stacked modules 14. Each module 14 houses a carousel in the form of rotary shelf 16 for supporting a number of floral arrangements. Housing 12 further includes dome 18 and base 20.

Housing 12 is substantially air-tight to resist the ingress of gases harmful to the floral arrangements such as ethylene gas that might be encountered at a vehicle service station.

Machine 10 further includes refrigeration coil 22. This coil operates to remove heat from the interior of machine 10. In combination with a thermostat, it is used to control the internal temperature of machine 10 to prolong the storage life of floral arrangements held

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within the machine.

Dome 18 is transparent to provide increased illumination at the top of the machine. This area of the machine is also warmer than the bottom due to the tendency for warm air to rise. The dome 18 area provides conditions suitable for tropical plants and when stocking the machine tropical plants are preferably positioned at the top of the machine 10.

Referring to figure 3, a top view of one of the modules 14 of figure 1 is shown. Module 14 includes a rotary shelf 16 arranged to support a number of floral arrangements 23. Shelf 16 rotates about hub 25. The shelf is divided into segments by steel dividers 26 and one floral arrangement is positioned in each segment. Module 14 is provided with two viewing windows 24 which allow a person to view one floral arrangement and which also operate as vending hatches. In use, rotation of shelf 16 is controlled so that it stops only when a floral arrangement positioned in a segment of shelf 16 is aligned with the viewing windows 24. Shelf 16 is perforated to allow air to flow through it.

Referring again to figures 1 and 2, machine 10 is of modular construction. For instance, the two lower modules 14 have been combined to form double height module 30. As a further alternative, half height module 32 could be incorporated into the machine. The configuration of the modules of the machine may be altered to allow for storage of floral arrangements of different heights.

Each viewing window 24 is provided with four lights 28 around its edges. These lights 28 serve to illuminate the floral arrangement 23 visible through window 24 and the heat from the lights serves to inhibit fogging of window 24 due to the refrigerated interior. A spotlight may also be provided mounted to illuminate the viewable floral arrangement to make it more visible to potential purchasers.

Machine 10 is stocked so that each rotary shelf 16

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carries the same type of floral arrangement 23. A person wishing to purchase a floral arrangement chooses which type of arrangement 23 they wish to purchase by looking in viewing window 24 of each module 14. To purchase, they 5 either make payment by inserting cash at payment panel 34, or instruct payment from a financial account such as by swiping a credit card and interacting with touch screen 40. The person then presses the selection button 36 on the module 14 that houses their desired floral arrangement 10 23. This causes viewing window 24 to slide sideways, allowing the person access to remove one floral arrangement from machine 10. After removal of the 15 arrangement, viewing window 24 closes and the appropriate rotary shelf 16 rotates to bring into view through viewing window 24 the next floral arrangement of the type that was purchased.

A receipt printer is provided that also serves to print message cards for use with floral arrangements purchased from machine 10. By entering their desired 20 message at touch screen 40 the person can obtain a printed message card from the receipt printer. This card may then be inserted into a card holder provided with the purchased floral arrangement 23.

By using telephone 38, or touch screen 40, a person 25 can place orders with florists for them to deliver floral arrangements to other locations.

Machine 10 includes a modem that allows machine to communicate with remote computer systems. This allows remote determination by the operator of the machine of 30 sales transaction history, clearing funds, stock levels, and the age of the stock in the machine.

Machine 10 includes a CD player activated by a motion sensor. The motion sensor activates the CD player if movement is detected near to the machine. This 35 automatically provides sound that can be used to motivate a person near to the machine to purchase from the machine.

A motion sensor can detect tampering of the machine

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which activates an internal siren and contacts a security service to alert them to investigate the tampering.

Machine 10 is generally circular. It does not need to be placed against a wall and hence people can approach 5 the machine from any angle. Providing a viewing window 24 in both the front and back of the machine allows people to determine the contents of the machine when standing either to the front or to the back of the machine.

It is to be understood that floral arrangements 10 include floral arrangements consisting of a single flower, a basket of fruit or a single fruit.

Any reference to prior art contained herein is not to be taken as an admission that the information is common general knowledge, unless otherwise indicated.

15 Finally, it is to be appreciated that various alterations or additions may be made to the parts previously described without departing from the spirit or ambit of the present invention.

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THE CLAIMS DEFINING THE INVENTION ARE AS FOLLOWS:

1. A machine for vending floral arrangements including:
5 a stack of generally circular carousels each for supporting a plurality of floral arrangements; and a generally cylindrical exterior housing surrounding the carousels.
2. A machine for vending floral arrangements including:
10 a stack of carousels each supporting a plurality of floral arrangements; and each of the plurality of floral arrangements supported on each carousel are of the same type and are vended at the same price.
3. A machine for vending floral arrangements including:
15 a carousel for supporting a plurality of floral arrangements;
the machine has a front and a back and includes at least one viewing window associated with the carousel, each viewing window being arranged to permit viewing of only one floral arrangement;
20 the at least one viewing window is positioned towards either one or both of the front or back of the machine; and
light from outside the machine may reach the floral arrangements on the carousel only by passing through
25 the at least one viewing window.

Dated this 17th day of March 2003

Lisa Hayden

30 By their Patent Attorneys
GRIFFITH HACK



